The translation into Spanish of the OIE Manual of diagnostic tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees): problems, solutions and conclusions

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Summary

In order to carry out the translation into Spanish of the *Manual of diagnostic tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees)* ensuring full scientific and linguistic accuracy, its authors relied on coordination between three types of experts: linguistic, translational and veterinary. In this paper the planning, execution and quality control of such work, which was undertaken with the support and guarantee of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), is reported. In the conclusions the authors describe what they view as necessary guidelines for the OIE to apply in the future regarding its linguistic policy. The working methodology reported in connection with the translation of the *Terrestrial Manual* into Spanish will be useful for the translation of the *Terrestrial Manual* or other texts into languages other than Spanish, whether or not they are among the official languages of the OIE.

Keywords

Animal health — Project coordination — Terminology — Translation — World Organisation for Animal Health.

Precedents

The Manual de pruebas de diagnóstico y de las vacunas para los animales terrestres (mamíferos, aves y abejas) (henceforth, Manual para los animales terrestres) (11) is the Spanish version of the Manual of diagnostic tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees) (henceforth, Terrestrial Manual) (12) of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). It is a basic tool in the prevention, control and eradication of infecto-contagious and parasitic diseases of terrestrial animals. It complements the Terrestrial animal health code (the Terrestrial Code) (14) in helping to promote the safe international trade of terrestrial animals and products of animal origin, and it contributes to the improvement of animal health services in all OIE Member Countries.

In the *Terrestrial Manual*, diagnostic laboratory techniques and requirements for the production and control of biological products – especially diagnostic tests and vaccines – are described and harmonised; the OIE has facilitated international consensus on these techniques and requirements in recent years.

Ever since the first edition of the *Terrestrial Manual* appeared in 1989, the OIE has relied on its reference laboratories and the best specialists from all over the world. The long and complex process of producing the *Terrestrial Manual* began in 1988, when the OIE Biological Standards Commission (Laboratories Commission [founded in 1949]) commissioned a group of experts which were then approved by the International Committee (15).

Commitments of the OIE Biological Standards Commission and the OIE Central Bureau Scientific and Technical Department

The OIE Biological Standards Commission, also known as the Laboratories Commission, has a range of different commitments related to the *Terrestrial Manual*, e.g.:

- to propose disease diagnostic and prevention techniques, especially for the diseases included in the *Terrestrial Code* (14), and to promote safe international trade of animals and animal products
- to define the standards for biological products that are used in diagnosis and in the manufacture of vaccines and sera for veterinary use

– to elaborate, upon request by the OIE International Committee, the standards that are applicable to other interventions pointed out in the *Terrestrial Code*

- to periodically update and publish the Terrestrial Manual and the Manual of diagnostic tests for aquatic animals
- to elaborate ideas and develop precise tools for improving the scientific and technical skills of the veterinary community, especially in developing countries
- to assist the OIE Director General in the updating of expert lists, reference laboratories and collaborating centres
- to work closely with the network of reference laboratories and collaborating centres in order to comply with the OIE directives
- to identify problems that need to be addressed, and to propose to the OIE Director General a list of experts and a list of possible members for different *ad hoc* groups, to convene their meetings and, if necessary, to take a share of their work (5, 7).

The Laboratories Commission develops the procedures that are described in the *Terrestrial Manual* and supervises its various English editions (1989, 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004); this supervision entails a periodic updating of all the chapters and the writing of additional chapters, including substantial additional information drawing on the latest biotechnological advances.

The Scientific and Technical Department at the OIE Central Bureau undertakes a wide range of activities, such as the following:

- organising, providing technical support for, and following up on the meetings and conferences of the OIE specialised commissions (Scientific Commission, Laboratories Commission and Aquatic Animals Commission)
- coordinating any ad hoc groups and working groups that the OIE Director General might decide to form
- supervising the editions of the Terrestrial Manual and the Manual of diagnostic tests for aquatic animals
- coordinating the activities of the 157 reference laboratories and the 17 collaborating centres, which are based in 31 countries and cover 94 diseases and which provide the organisation with scientific and technical support.

The proposals and conclusions of the different specialised commissions are submitted to the OIE International Committee during its general meetings, which are held once a year at the OIE Central Bureau in Paris (5, 7).

The translation into Spanish of the *Manual of diagnostic* tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees)

The translation of the *Terrestrial Manual* was undertaken by the OIE in response to the needs and requests of the delegates from the OIE's 21 Spanish-speaking Member Countries. The main objective of the translation was to provide all veterinary diagnostic laboratories and all firms manufacturing vaccines and biological products in Spanish-speaking countries with a linguistically and technically accurate Spanish version of the *Terrestrial Manual*. Given the linguistic relatedness of Spanish and other Latin-derived languages, it is reasonable to think that the latter could also benefit from the translation project reported here.

The project was in line with the policy of the OIE Central Bureau to establish scientific standards, and it was integrated into the OIE Third Strategic Plan (2001-2005) (10) and implemented as part of the Director General's Working Programme (9).

The translation was financed in equal share by Spain and Argentina (2003-2004 and 2004-2005) through the Subdirección General de Sanidad Animal del Ministerio de Agricultura, Pesca y Alimentación (MAPA) (Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) and the Servicio Nacional de Sanidad y Calidad Agroalimentaria (SENASA) (National Service for Agricultural and Food Product Health and Quality), respectively.

During the translation process, solutions were provided to problems relating to terminological standardisation, syntax, semantics, pragmatics and Anglicisms; some of the solutions provided were only provisional answers to problems that neither the translators nor the experts could fully resolve. To provide just one example, the translation of acronyms posed a real problem, which has been commented upon previously (6); the translation of acronyms will require extensive discussions among the members of the 'Ad hoc Group for the translation of the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals' (the Ad hoc Group) and it will be necessary to conduct surveys among specialists, all of which requires more time than was available for the translation project. Indeed, the translation of acronyms should be tackled much more carefully in the translation of future editions of the Terrestrial Manual into Spanish, since the results should provide a model for tackling acronyms in the translation and production of any other OIE documents in Spanish.

In the authors' view, this translation project was justified by:

- the scientific and technical importance of the Terrestrial Manual in the veterinary field
- the need for veterinarians, technicians in diagnostic laboratories and manufacturers of vaccines based in Spanish-speaking countries to be able to rely upon the scientific and linguistic accuracy of the translation, so that they can overcome the linguistic barriers during their use of such an essential text
- the fact that Spanish, together with French and English, is one of the three OIE official languages; the OIE must therefore provide its Spanish-speaking members with scientific and technical texts that are written in correct Spanish
- the global importance of the Spanish language (Spanish is spoken by four hundred million people living in 21 different countries, and its use is continually increasing)
- the similarity between Spanish and other Latin-derived languages: speakers of these languages may find a Spanish version of the *Terrestrial Manual* easier to understand than an English version
- the project's originality; this is the first time the OIE has undertaken to translate from English into Spanish such a scientifically and technically far-reaching text as the Terrestrial Manual (1, 2, 3, 4). However, there is a minor precedent for this major translation: the Suplemento del Manual de Normas para las pruebas de diagnóstico y las vacunas para las Listas A y B de enfermedades de mamíferos, aves y abejas (8).

Materials and methods

To develop this and other similar projects, the OIE's Director General contacted the veterinarian and researcher Dr F. Crespo León, who had previously worked for the Scientific and Technical Department at the OIE Central Bureau from 2000 to 2001 (during which time he also advised on Spanish translation and terminology issues). Dr Crespo León, who is a researcher at the Instituto Murciano de Investigación Agraria y Alimentaria in Murcia, Spain, was appointed as Secretary of the 'Directing Committee for the implementation of the correct use of Spanish in connection with veterinary science and technology within the field of animal health and related sciences' (the Directing Committee) and Secretary of the newly formed *Ad hoc* Group.

The methodology used during the OIE-sponsored translation project will serve as a model for the planning, development and quality control of future projects

undertaken by countries with similar technical and linguistic problems.

The OIE Directing Committee for the implementation of the correct use of Spanish in connection with veterinary science and technology within the field of animal health and related sciences

The Directing Committee was created, at the request of the Director General, during the 71st OIE General Session in May 2003.

The Directing Committee consists of a President, Dr B. Vallat (OIE Director General), a Vice President, Dr J.-L. Angot (Head of the OIE Central Bureau Administrative and Financial Department), and four further members, who represent Spanish-speaking Member Countries at the OIE, Dr A. Cabello Navarro (Spain), Dr L. Barcos (Argentina), Dr D. Cedeño Quevedo (Colombia) and Dr E. Serrano Ramírez (Cuba). Dr A. Schudel, Head of the OIE Scientific and Technical Department, acts as OIE Coordinator, and Dr Crespo León, is the Secretary.

The mandate of the Directing Committee is for a renewable three year period. All Committee members were appointed by the OIE Administrative Commission upon the Director General's proposal and were confirmed by the International Committee.

The Directing Committee has the following responsibilities:

- to define areas of the *Ad hoc* Group's activities concerning the correct use of Spanish in connection with scientific and technical veterinary topics
- to ensure that the *Ad hoc* Group's activities are carried out with the necessary scientific and linguistic accuracy
- to make sure that translations of scientific and technical texts produced by the OIE are disseminated across Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries
- to facilitate the financing of the Ad hoc Group's activities.

The Directing Committee holds a yearly meeting, the agenda for which is established by the Secretary and agreed by the President. During the meeting, held at the same time as the OIE General Session, members of the Directing Committee review the tasks carried out by the *Ad hoc* Group since the previous meeting and those to be carried out before the next meeting, including tasks that the Director General may propose in response to the needs of the OIE Member Countries.

In each of the International Committee's General Sessions the Director General informs the Committee about the development of the activities and submits them to the Committee for approval.

The Ad hoc Group for the translation of the Manual of diagnostic tests and vaccines for terrestrial animals (mammals, birds and bees)

The *Ad hoc* Group was established, upon the Directing Committee's proposal, for a renewable three year term. In accordance with the statutes of the *Ad hoc* Group, the President is elected by its members for the same period, and the President appoints a Secretary. The *Ad hoc* Group has eleven members: nine are veterinary specialists in the field of animal health and two are specialists in translation, lexicography and terminology. Six are Spanish, two are Argentinian and one is Mexican. The two linguists are Spanish.

The main responsibilities of the Ad hoc Group are:

- to carry out activities in areas defined by the Directing Committee as well as those that both the Directing Committee and the OIE Director General might propose
- to ensure that such activities are carried out with due scientific and linguistic accuracy
- to be accountable to the Directing Committee, which is responsible for the direction, follow-up and assessment of the Ad hoc Group's activities
- to help and support both the OIE Director General and the Directing Committee in improving the services provided and solving problems that might arise during the exercising of the *Ad hoc* Group's responsibilities.

The *Ad hoc* Group holds a yearly meeting with the Directing Committee, the agenda for which is established by the Secretary and agreed by the President. In that meeting, the *Ad hoc* Group's activities are assessed in a way similar to that employed with the Directing Committee.

The team of translators

A team of translators was established, headed by Dr F. Gutiérrez, Professor of English Philology at the Faculty of Arts, University of Murcia, Spain. The translators themselves were four lecturers from the Faculty of Biology, University of Murcia, one lecturer from the Faculty of Arts, University of Murcia, and two professional graduate translators, both with MAs in Translation and Interpreting from the University of Murcia.

The OIE Central Bureau coordinator

The activities of the Directing Committee and the Ad hoc Group are coordinated by Dr Schudel, Head of the OIE

Scientific and Technical Department. The Central Bureau is responsible for both inviting the members of the Directing Committee and *Ad hoc* Group to attend meetings and exchanging correspondence with people and institutions that the Directing Committee and *Ad hoc* Group wish to consult with.

In addition, the Central Bureau puts all the necessary means, such as translating facilities and literature, at the disposal of the *Ad hoc* Group for the preparation of the group's meeting reports.

Translation methodology and the translation control process: quantitative issues

From the beginning of the project on 16 October 2003 to its conclusion on 15 July 2004, all the members of the *Ad hoc* Group and the translators involved worked intensively on this project, requiring considerable initiative and coordination.

The starting point was the last English edition of the *Terrestrial Manual*, published by the OIE in 2004. The Head of the Scientific and Technical Department was responsible for sending chapters of the English version to Dr Crespo León, Secretary of the *Ad hoc* Group, who classified them, keeping a record in a control file, and forwarded them to the coordinator, Professor Gutiérrez, who was responsible for coordinating the translators. Then, the coordinator allocated the texts to the translators (Fig. 1).

When the translators provided translated texts, the coordinator carried out a preliminary linguistic and translational revision. The first revised versions were then sent back to the translators so that they could take note of the corrections and consider them in forthcoming chapters.

The translated chapters, after revision and editing, were forwarded to the Secretary, who handed them over to the veterinary specialists of the *Ad hoc* Group, according to their fields of expertise, for revision of the scientific text.

Finally, the veterinary specialists of the Ad hoc Group returned the revised and corrected chapters to the Secretary, who forwarded them to the coordinator. The coordinator incorporated the scientific corrections,

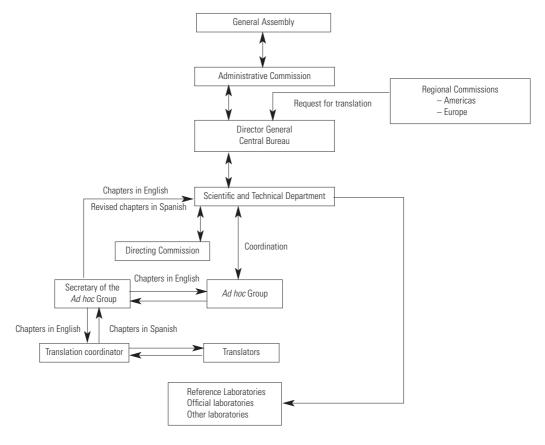


Fig. 1
The steps in the process of translating the *Terrestrial Manual* into Spanish

checking for text homogeneity in accordance with the style criteria fixed during monthly meetings with the Secretary.

There were two distinct parts to the control process: translational control and quality control.

Translational control was carried out by keeping records of both the various translation stages and the revisions (see above).

Quality control consisted of three sub-control phases:

- all changes made to the source text were recorded, using the word processor's track changes facility. This computational aid allowed those involved to keep track of all changes made to the source text, such as successive translations and corrections
- the Secretary and the coordinator revised the translations so that they were in keeping with the style criteria of the *Terrestrial Manual* and made choices about terminology from among the various suggestions put forward by the different specialists
- the coordinator maintained overall translation control, to ensure consistency of translation criteria and text style among the veterinary specialists in the final version.

Some quantitative features can be summarised here:

chapters translated: 111pages translated: 1,263

- e-mails sent (by the Secretary): 532

working time: 9 monthsmeetings: 9 (1, 2, 3, 4)

- articles in the OIE Scientific and Technical Review (the Review): 2.

The Secretary of the Directing Committee and of the *Ad hoc* Group presented the first Spanish edition of the *Terrestrial Manual* at three conferences:

- the 21st Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for Europe, Ávila, Spain, 28 September-1 October 2004 (3)
- the 17th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, Panama, 16-19 November 2004 (2)
- the Meeting of the Regional Commission of the OIE for the Americas, 73rd General Session of the OIE, Paris (4).

Furthermore, Dr Gutiérrez and Dr Crespo León published an article in the OIE Review: 'La traducción al español del Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals: soluciones presentes y futuras' ('The Spanish translation of the Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals: current and future solutions') (6).

Agreements of the Directing Committee and scheduled projects of the *Ad hoc* Group for 2004-2006

The translation of the *Terrestrial Manual* is a dynamic project, and, during the translation process, new related activities and projects emerged, requested by members of other Spanish-speaking countries via the Directing Committee. Other activities and projects have been suggested by the *Ad hoc* Group. Any regional or international institution or any Member Country of the OIE is welcome to join these activities and projects. One of the goals of the OIE is to publish the Spanish edition of the *Terrestrial Manual* every four years; that is, whenever a new English version is released.

Projects based on the agreements reached by the Directing Committee

Following agreements reached by the Directing Committee on 28 May 2004 at the Central Bureau of the OIE, and at the suggestion of some of its members, the following projects were approved:

- the translation into Spanish of the Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals
- periodical updating of the *Terrestrial Manual*, both in print and on the OIE webpage, and the translation of any additional text or new chapters
- the design, compilation and implementation of a multilingual terminological database covering animal health and other related areas. This database will be an essential tool in any translation of technical and scientific texts produced by the OIE. The multilingual terminological database will be accessible to scientists via the OIE webpage. All terms and translations provided in the multilingual terminological database will have been corrected and standardised by experts of the Ad hoc Group to ensure accuracy and precision. The periodical updating of this multilingual terminological database is of prime importance. This will involve not just updating the translations but also including new terms and excluding obsolete ones (P. Cantos Gómez, Base terminológica multilingüe español-inglés-francés para el ámbito de la sanidad animal. Unpublished report, 2004). In addition, the online version will be edited and published as a print version in the format of a multilingual glossary or dictionary.

The main reasons for developing this multilingual terminological database are:

- to facilitate and ensure access to a fully validated and standardised multilingual terminological database covering animal health and other related areas for scientists, technicians, translators or anyone interested in these topics, in order that they may fully understand and correctly interpret any term appearing in OIE texts or related journals, periodicals, etc.
- to provide an easy-to-use and publicly available search facility for multilingual terms relating to animal health
- to offer a final solution to the main problem faced by most OIE text translators, by providing them with a standardised database of scientific, technical and administrative terms relating to animal health (4).

All these projects are to be included in the Working Programme that the OIE Director General has to implement for the OIE Fourth Strategic Plan (2006-2010) (13).

Other projects

The members of the *Ad hoc* Group suggested that one potential project is the analysis of controversial animal health terminology. Such an analysis would be carried out by compiling a list or corpus of all linguistic and terminological corrections and amendments made during the translation of the English version of the *Terrestrial Manual* into Spanish. The discussion of these corrections and amendments will conclude in an agreed list of translated terms, which will eventually be included in the above mentioned multilingual terminological database.

Each Spanish term and any alternative term(s) proposed as equivalent(s) to the term(s) found in the English texts will be tabulated in the multilingual terminological database, accompanied by contextual information (a short sentence) in order to facilitate understanding and avoid any possible misunderstanding. Furthermore, any complementary or relevant information supplied by the translation coordinator will also be added to the term.

This process will result in an inventory or glossary of all the controversial terms, plus all the previous additional information from the various translation stages and from the design, compilation and implementation of the multilingual terminological database.

Other potential projects suggested by members of the *Ad hoc* Group are:

- compiling a list of scientific and technical vocabulary relating to animal health and other related areas
- transferring the OIE vocabulary database into the new computational tool and translating all the vocabulary items into the three official languages (English, French and Spanish)

- arranging an effective infrastructure for the reception, discussion, validation/standardisation and transference of the lexical data
- implementing the multilingual terminological database within the OIE intranet in order to make it available to the OIE community and translators
- periodically enlarging and updating the scientific and technical vocabulary of the OIE for public access via the OIE webpage
- publishing ongoing work and projects in the OIE Review.

Conclusions

The authors would like to highlight a number of conclusions that resulted from the translation of the *Terrestrial Manual* into Spanish. Some of these conclusions have already been discussed (6) and presented at conferences (1, 2, 3, 4):

- *a)* the OIE has already developed the necessary infrastructure regarding linguistic and translational issues for Spanish. There is also a Directing Committee in charge of all linguistic matters and style criteria for translation from English into Spanish. This is to ensure accurate and coherent usage of Spanish terminology within the domain of animal health
- b) the *Ad hoc* Group is in charge of more technical linguistic issues relating to the translation of specialised lexicon. This group has worked enthusiastically and has been truly devoted to the linguistic activities of the OIE
- c) the Directing Committee, which is in charge of the policy regarding Spanish translations of OIE publications, needs to reflect on its role within the OIE and its responsibilities with relation to the programming of activities
- d) various problems and difficulties were encountered during the translation of the *Terrestrial Manual*; the solutions to these problems require changes in policy at various levels. The authors urge the implementation of:
- a multilingual terminological database covering animal health (in English, Spanish and French, i.e. the official languages of the OIE), as a reference for translators, editors and veterinary specialists working on translated text
- a linguistic policy regarding the correct and accurate morphosyntactic and pragmatic usage of veterinary terminology. This would be an essential complement to the multilingual database
- e) on numerous occasions, the *Ad hoc* Group experienced severe difficulties because they did not have at their

disposal a standardised terminological database or a scientific and technical multilingual glossary covering animal health that had been validated by the OIE. Consequently, many of the translation decisions taken by the *Ad hoc* Group were provisional. The *Ad hoc* Group will benefit from having both a printed and an electronic (accessible via the OIE webpage) terminological database when translating forthcoming editions of the *Terrestrial Manual*

- f) from a translational perspective, it would be most valuable to make the above-mentioned tools available for use as soon as possible. To achieve this, the OIE should take an official decision on this issue and include it as part of the Working Programme of the Director General, who is in charge of implementing the Fourth Strategic Plan
- g) the Ad hoc Group might have performed much better overall in 'harmonising' controversial issues in the translation process if the group members had been personally in contact with each other. A possible alternative might have been interactive communication between the members via the internet. However, this type of internet communication is time-consuming and would have significantly delayed the whole translation process, making it impossible to meet the agreed delivery deadlines
- h) it might be advantageous to enlarge the *Ad hoc* Group to include an expert on medical pathology, owing to its similarity to veterinary pathology. This expert might

- contribute significantly to the decisions taken on controversial translational issues
- i) there is a need for the *Ad hoc* Group to meet at least once a year in order to discuss and resolve linguistic issues and to establish an annual programme of activities
- *j*) in order to avoid facing the same problems with forthcoming translations of veterinary texts, including the updating of the *Terrestrial Manual* on the OIE webpage, linguistic and terminological coherence must be ensured. The first step is the compilation of a multilingual terminological database linked to a normative set of rules on the correct and accurate morphosyntactic and pragmatic use of veterinary terminology. The translation process and the lexical-terminological compilation should be merged into a single project
- *k*) the multilingual terminological database covering animal health and related areas will be an indispensable tool for the translation of the scientific and technical texts produced by the OIE. The continuity and stability of the *Ad hoc* Group depends heavily on the design, compilation and implementation of this database. Once compiled and validated, the content of the database can be edited and published in the form of printed dictionaries and/or glossaries.

Traduction en espagnol du *Manuel des tests de diagnostic* et des vaccins pour les animaux terrestres (mammifères, oiseaux et abeilles) de l'OIE : problèmes, solutions et conclusions

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Résumé

Afin d'assurer la parfaite fiabilité scientifique et linguistique de la traduction en espagnol du *Manuel des tests de diagnostic et des vaccins pour les animaux terrestres (mammifères, oiseaux et abeilles)* de l'OIE, ses auteurs se sont appuyés sur la coopération entre trois types de spécialistes : linguistes, traducteurs et vétérinaires. Le présent article décrit l'organisation, l'exécution et le contrôle de la qualité de ce travail, qui a été entrepris avec l'aide et l'aval de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé animale (OIE). Dans les conclusions, les auteurs exposent les règles que l'OIE devrait selon eux appliquer à l'avenir en

matière de politique linguistique. La méthode de travail décrite pour la traduction en espagnol du *Manuel terrestre* sera utile pour la traduction de ce dernier ou d'autres textes dans d'autres langues, qu'elles fassent partie ou non des langues officielles de l'OIE.

Mots-clés

Coordination des projets — Organisation mondiale de la santé animale — Santé animale — Terminologie — Traduction.

La traducción al español del *Manual de pruebas de diagnóstico y vacunas para los animales terrestres (mamíferos, aves y abejas)* de la OIE: problemas, soluciones y conclusiones

F. Crespo León, F. Gutiérrez Díez, F. Rodríguez Ferri, L. León Vizcaíno, F. Cuello Gijón, E.J. Gimeno, C. Zepeda Sein, J.M. Sánchez Vizcaíno Rodríguez, J.J. Cerón Madrigal, P. Cantos Gómez & A. Schudel

Resumen

Para traducir al español el *Manual de pruebas de diagnóstico y vacunas para los animales terrestres (mamíferos, aves y abejas)* con plenas garantías científicas y lingüísticas, se estableció un sistema de coordinación entre tres tipos de expertos: lingüístas, traductores y veterinarios. Los autores exponen en este artículo la preparación, ejecución y control de calidad de la traducción bajo los auspicios de la Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal (OIE). En sus conclusiones establecen las que han de ser las pautas que la OIE debe adoptar necesariamente en el futuro en su política lingüística. La metodología utilizada en este trabajo puede ser de utilidad para la traducción de otros documentos a otras lenguas, sean o no lenguas oficiales de la OIE.

Palabras clave

Coordinación de proyecto — Organización Mundial de Sanidad Animal — Sanidad animal — Terminología — Traducción.

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